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RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 7652  
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RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 3245  
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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - GEORGIA-RUSSIA CRISIS  
AND MISSILE DEFENSE

11. LEAD STORIES: Most Friday morning papers gave prominent top play to the Japanese team's gold medal in women's softball in the Beijing Olympics.

12. "Russia's Continued Stationing of Troops Unacceptable" The conservative Sankei editorialized (8/22): "Russia's announcement that it will continue to station ground troops in Georgia tramples on the principles of the ceasefire.... Does the Russian military plan to stay in Georgia long-term? If so, Georgia's sovereignty will be ignored and its territorial integrity violated. The Russian military reportedly plans to set up a security zone in Georgia in order to guarantee the truce. However, it runs counter to international norms for a party to a conflict to be involved in monitoring the ceasefire.... Russia appears to be ramping up an expansionist policy, as it has reconstituted its power following the surge in energy prices. If things stand unchecked, additional conflicts may break out. It is high time for the U.S. and Europe to commit to accelerated NATO membership by Georgia and Ukraine from the viewpoint of crisis preemption."

13. "Concerns about Cooling of U.S.-Russia Relations" The business-oriented Nikkei asserted in an editorial (8/22): "Was it really necessary for the U.S. to rush into a missile defense accord (with Poland) at a time when tensions with Moscow have become more pronounced over the crisis in Georgia?... Tensions between the U.S. and Russia will significantly affect coordination on issues facing the international community, including the war on terrorism, nuclear disarmament, the nuclear programs of North Korea and Iran, and global warming. A

revival of the Cold War must be avoided, as it would run against the current of the times."

¶4. "Is the Folly of the Cold War Being Repeated?" The liberal Tokyo Shimbun contended (8/22): "The problems confronting the globalized world cannot be resolved by the U.S and Russia alone. It is imperative to come up with a conflict resolution mechanism takes into account the emergence of China, India, and Iran.... Relying on force to resolve conflicts is untenable. The folly of the Cold War must not be repeated."

¶5. "U.S. Should Halt Deployment of Missile Defense System" The liberal Asahi insisted (8/22): "Unlike during the Cold War, the U.S. and Russia need each other in dealing with international security issues. Russia is working diplomatically with the U.S. and Europe to press Iran to halt uranium enrichment. A deeper schism between Russia and the U.S. over the deployment of a missile defense system against Iran would weaken negotiating leverage vis-a-vis Tehran. This vicious circle would risk endangering security in Europe and around the world.... What is needed at this moment is not a confrontation over missile defense but the reestablishment of a relationship of cooperation by encouraging Russia to withdraw its troops from Georgia. The U.S. must first suspend its hasty plan to deploy an MD system (in Poland)."

SCHIEFFER